



Annual Performance Report

Federal Fiscal Year 2008

Providing opportunities for people with developmental disabilities and their families to enhance independence, productivity, and inclusion.

About this Report

Created by federal law and funded by the United States Congress, Developmental Disabilities Councils work to effect changes in public policy so that people with developmental disabilities and their families are empowered and supported to become more personally independent and economically productive. Based on the needs as determined by people with developmental disabilities and their families, Councils develop and implement five-year State Plans, which include goals and objectives to address the most important issues impacting people with developmental disabilities. The current five-year State Plan covers October 1, 2006 – September 30, 2011.

Each year the Council submits a Federal Program Performance Report to the Administration on Developmental Disabilities detailing the advocacy, capacity building and systemic change activities that the Council has undertaken in an effort to meet its State Plan goals and objectives. Because the federal report is a technical document that is completed and submitted on-line, this report is produced in order to provide information in a more readable format. The 2008 report is the second annual report for the current five-year plan.

Contents

Status of Services and Supports in the Commonwealth	2
Initiatives and Accomplishments in 2007	
Community Supports	3
Education and Early Intervention	5
Employment	7
Housing	9
Quality Assurance	10
Recreation	12
Public Policy, Cross Cutting and Other	13
FFY 2007 Expenditures	15
State Developmental Disabilities Network Collaboration	17
Consumer Satisfaction	18

Status of Services and Supports in the Commonwealth

Due to the economic crisis the state cut its overall FY09 budget by approximately 7% in October. However the Governor indicated that services to elders and disabilities were priority budget areas, and the total cut for the disabilities cluster programs was only \$10.9 Million. Although receiving the largest cut at \$7.3 Million, Department of Mental Retardation (DMR) was cut less than 1%, a major victory for developmental disabilities advocates. The Autism Division received a \$1.5 Million reduction in the expansion of the waiver, which will result in a reduction in children served. Earmarks in all community line items were reduced by 50%, and DMR lost funding in State Facilities and Administration. Other disability reductions included slightly over \$1.1 Million in Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission's extended employment program, which includes individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities. The Community First program was reduced by \$6.5 Million from \$20 to \$13.5, but the state still plans to implement the waiver this year, leaving enough funds to operate the program in 2009 once the federal government approves the waiver. \$400,000 was eliminated from the Independent Living Program, all or most of the reductions from earmarks. \$1 Million was reduced in the Early Intervention program which could result in a revision of eligibility regulations.

In September the US Court of Appeals reversed a previous federal order that essentially barred the state from moving individuals out of the Fernald Developmental Center. With the last legal hurdle removed the state acted quickly and announced plans to close four of the state's six institutions over the next four years. Residents will transition to community settings or one of the two remaining facilities, based on each individual's needs and wishes. It is anticipated that approximately 316 individuals will transition to community-based settings and up to \$45 million of the estimated \$90 million savings will be reinvested to support the community placement of these individuals. Facility re-use will be guided by local planning processes that set up under the auspices of the state's Division of Capital Asset Management and the Department of Housing and Community Development.

The Autism Waiver Program's application received approval from the Federal Centers for Medicaid and Medicare Services (CMS) in October 2007. The waiver is a 3-year demonstration that if renewed will go for five years, with revisions based on the experiences from the current program. A maximum of 80 children will be served, and the services cannot supplant any services that should be provided by another source. A child must be Medicaid-eligible and the family must fall with certain income guidelines, and clinical eligibility requires that a child meet the level of care for an Intermediate Care Facility. The waiver is based on a participant-directed model that enables the family to make their own decisions about supports and about which providers they would like to use. Once a child reaches age 9, or has completed the maximum three-year period of support, the child is referred back to the appropriate DMR Area Office for transition to DMR family support services.

Proposals to ban or restrict the use of electrical shock therapy were relegated by lawmakers to a study, and the bills died when the legislative session expired. Ban proponents had expressed optimism that at least one of the bills would see favorable action, even though bans on aversive therapy had been defeated for decades. The optimism stemmed from the introduction this session of what supporters said was a compromise bill, one that sought to control the use of aversive therapy rather than ban it outright. The conflict stems mainly around the Judge Rotenberg Center, the only school in the country that regularly applies electric shock therapy. As many as half or more of the 200-plus residents of center receive aversive treatment.

Initiatives and Accomplishments in 2008

Community Supports

Individuals received formal/informal community supports	4,569
Dollars leveraged for community supports	\$8,188,930
Programs/policies created/improved	24
People trained in formal/informal community supports	807

The Council partnered with Arc MA to increase access to quality community services and supports for people with developmental disabilities. The project provided education to policymakers and others about the opportunity for community service expansion through community-based waivers, and continued a campaign for more community-based housing and less institutional care. Advocacy efforts and a media campaign contributed to the Governor's successful appeal of a court decision favoring continued institutionalization of people with developmental disabilities. The project also worked to obtain over \$14 million in new funding for community services. Other outcomes include 1,061 people active in systems advocacy, 542 people trained in systems advocacy, and over 4,100 people received community services and supports.

The Council continued the Barbara Wilensky Gopen Fellowship, a one-year fellowship offering a unique opportunity for a person with a developmental disability or family member to gain expertise in disability issues and to work with the Massachusetts Developmental Disabilities Network programs on a project that they propose, design and implement. The 2007 Fellow completed research and development of a handbook to accessible Community Technology Centers (CTCs) in Massachusetts. The guide was distributed to disability agencies across Massachusetts. The fellow also collaborated with the Network's Protection and Advocacy organization to train 14 people from the CTCs. The 2008 Fellow initiated a project to educate students and teachers to achieve social inclusion for children in the special education system.

The one-stop family center established through the SCAN 360 Project actively supports families who have a member with a developmental disability. The project is based in the city of Springfield, a city with diverse multicultural populations and a high poverty rate. Families access information and support through a network of human service agencies and community providers. Families are provided assistance via a "Family Navigator" to navigate the system efficiently and effectively. Trainings and mentored support groups are provided, along with information and referral and an opportunity to connect with other families. The project outcomes include 21 people with disabilities active in recreational activities, 25 people benefitting from community supports and 6 people obtaining transportation services.

Community Supports Projects

Unmet Needs Systems Change (06.CS.E)

To increase access to services for people with developmental disabilities.

Gopen Fellowship - vanBruinswaardt (07.CS.J)

To educate students and teachers to achieve social inclusion for children in the special education system.

Collaborative Systems Change Initiative (07.CS.K)

To develop and disseminate a guide to accessible Community Technology Centers in Massachusetts.

SCAN 360/NNCC (08.CS.A)

To improve access to family support services for underserved minorities with developmental disabilities and their families.

The MA Building Blocks Project (08.CS.B)

To enhance person centered planning and advance self-determination.

Building Inclusive Communities (08.CS.D)

To Increase awareness about autism and developmental disabilities among librarians and elementary schoolchildren.

DD/MR Emergency Preparedness Initiative (08.CS.E)

To strengthen emergency preparedness efforts for people with development disabilities.

Here to Help Advocacy Program (08.CS.F)

To improve access to quality care for people with developmental disabilities through the provision of a trained volunteer advocate.

Dental Registry (08.CS.G)

To maintain a web based list of dentists serving people with developmental disabilities in the Commonwealth.

Gopen Fellowship - McCue (08.CS.K)

To develop and disseminate a guide to accessible Community Technology Centers in Massachusetts.

Making the Youth Trauma Program Accessible (08.CS.M)

To train local community agencies and to advocate for improved trauma services to people with disabilities.

Quality Home Care Workforce Council (08.CS.N)

To improve the ability of individuals with disabilities to find and hire quality Personal Care Attendants under the MassHealth Personal Care Attendant program.

Education and Early Intervention

Students have the education and support they need	2,767
Infants and young children have needed services/supports	642
Dollars leveraged for education	\$5,565,000
Education programs/policies created/improved	20
Post-secondary institutions improved inclusive education	9
Schools improved Individual Education Plan practices	914
Parents trained regarding their child's educational rights	635

The Council continues support for the Special Education Collaborative Project to promote policies and practices that enhance educational potential and inclusion of children with developmental disabilities. This unique partnership of diverse stakeholders includes participants from 34 statewide organizations and agencies representing parents, advocates, school administrators, teachers unions, state education and higher education officials, human service agencies, post-secondary institutions, and the legislature.

The collaboration prioritized overcoming barriers to successful transition from school to the community, with a focus on integrated educational, vocational, and independent living opportunities. The partnership continued to monitor and advocate for full and effective implementation of the \$1,575,000 Inclusive Concurrent Enrollment line item that established a pilot program for students with disabilities who fail the Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System. The jointly convened advisory group, made up of members of the Special Education Collaborative Group and the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, served as an excellent forum to bring the different parties together to address enrollment barriers and develop a strategy to overcome these obstacles. Significant progress has been reported in terms of changes in policies and practices, as well as benefits and gains in skills demonstrated by students with disabilities. In 2008 over 2400 students received quality education and support services, and over 900 schools improved their Individual Education Plan practices as a result of this initiative.

A significant legislative victory was achieved when the Governor signed S. 286, An Act to Maintain Transition Age Requirements for Students with Disabilities. Under the new law, special education transition planning and transition services must commence at age 14, rather than waiting to age 16 as now permitted under federal law. Transition services are critical to facilitate a student's education, adult services independent living, and community participation.

The final FY09 budget sent to the Governor doubled the appropriations for the Children's Autism Medicaid Waiver with a total appropriation of \$4 million for the Wavier to respond to the huge wait list. The Collaboration continues to focus administrative advocacy efforts on concerns with speed and efficacy of implementation.

Education and Early Intervention Projects

Special Education Collaboration Project (06.ED.G)

To promote policies and practices that enhance educational potential and inclusion of children with developmental disabilities through a unique collaboration of diverse stakeholders.

Shriver Center Advisory Committee (08.ED.A)

To advise the Shriver Center University Center for Excellence on strategies to enhance services and supports to people with developmental disabilities

Education Law Task Force (08.ED.B)

To enhance legal representation of people with developmental disabilities in education law issues.

MCAS Brochure Project (08.ED.C)

To educate parents about the rights of, and options for, students with disabilities who fail MA Comprehensive Assessment System, the states' standardized test.

Early Intervention Inter-agency Coordinating Council (08.ED.D)

To plan, develop and implement early intervention services.

Autism Legal Support Project (08.ED.E)

To provide information, materials, training and supports to parents, autism support centers, Arc's and other organizations and professionals working with parents.

Life After We Screen (08.ED.F)

To identify the barriers preventing children referred for community developmental services from accessing them, provide supports as needed, and generate an action plan to overcome these obstacles.

Employment

Adults have jobs of their choice	9
Dollars leveraged for employment	\$15,801
Employment programs/policies created/improved	5
People trained in employment	1,169

The Council participated in the Employment Now Coalition. People with disabilities and advocacy groups across the state meet to strategize on the changes needed to assist people with disabilities in achieving meaningful employment. The Coalition was successful in partnering with state government in an effort to develop a model that Massachusetts can implement to increase employment opportunities for people with disabilities in the Commonwealth. Among other issues such as costs for reasonable accommodations and transportation, the coalition is working to address youth with disabilities who are transitioning from the educational system to adulthood.

The Council joined a partnership with the Commonwealth Human Resources Division to establish the Disabilities Employment Task Force. The task force will recruit, hire and promote more people with disabilities in state government. The task force drafted a plan of action to meet this goal, including both short and long term objectives.

The Council continued an initiative with the MA Association of Benefits Services (MABS) to disseminate and train Social Security beneficiaries to use a Benefits Planning Calendar to help keep track of their earnings and reporting requirements. It provides a mechanism for individuals to record earnings and deductible expenses, and store correspondence from and to SSA. The project provided calendars and training to 1,000 working and self-employed beneficiaries in 2008.

From Self-Advocacy to Self-Employed is a peer-based training project in partnership with the Western Massachusetts Training Consortium. The project provides training, technical assistance and support to self-advocates interested in becoming entrepreneurs to run their own businesses, many as a means of supplementing their existing income. In year two of the project six self-advocates started and sustained their own businesses. The self-advocate entrepreneur network association supports the participants' ongoing entrepreneurial activities.

The Council continued work with the MA Rehabilitation Commission, the Institute for Community Inclusion and other public and private agencies on strategies to enhance services and supports to people with developmental disabilities, expand community-based employment options for people with developmental disabilities, and to provide recommendations to Health and Human Services concerning integration policies and practices.

Employment Projects

From Self-Advocacy To Self-Employed (06.EM.F)

To develop a training curriculum on how to start a small business, provide trainings toward that goal, and to fund (with seed money) ten self advocates to start their own businesses.

ICI Advisory Committee (08.EM.A)

To advise the Institute for Community Inclusion on strategies to enhance services and supports to people with developmental disabilities.

Rehabilitation Advisory Council (08.EM.B)

To enhance employment opportunities for people with disabilities.

MABS Benefit Planning Calendar (08.EM.C)

To redesign and disseminate a Benefits Planning Calendar and train Social Security Disability Insurance and Social Security Income recipients who work or are seeking employment.

Self-Employment for Youth (08.EM.D)

To connect youth with disabilities and their parents to resources for self-employment and business ownership.

Employment Now Coalition (08.EM.F)

To support equal rights and genuine opportunities for people with disabilities in mainstreamed competitive employment environments.

Disability Employment Project (08.EM.G)

To expand employment opportunities for individuals with developmental disabilities in state government

Housing

Individuals have homes of their choice	50
Dollars leveraged for housing	\$700,000
Housing programs/policies created/improved	2
Units of affordable, accessible housing made available	200
People trained in housing	15

The Council continued its support to implement the Principles in Action Project to promote affordable, integrated housing for people with disabilities. The housing advocacy coalition comprised of people with disabilities held meetings with policymakers in the state's housing, human services and rehabilitation services departments. The coalition continued dissemination of "Principles for Developing Integrated Housing in the Community for Individuals with Disabilities", and the partners successfully advocated to restore \$2 million in proposed funding cuts to key housing programs for people with disabilities, and worked to pass the Housing Bond Bill that was signed into law in May, 2008. This bill included additional bond funding of \$30 million for the Community-Based Housing program and \$50 million for the Home Modification Loan Program.

The Council continued its partnership with the United Housing Coalition to advocate for the development and preservation of affordable supportive housing options, successfully advocating for \$500,000 for the alternative voucher housing program. The Council continued support to the web-based housing registry for people with disabilities, and an initiative to provide no or low interest loans to individuals to make their homes accessible for household members with mobility impairments, and a partnership to assist people with developmental disabilities to obtain down payment assistance for home ownership.

Housing Projects

United Housing Coalition (08.HO.A)

To advocate for development and preservation of affordable community based housing options for people with disabilities.

Web Accessibility of Mass Access (08.HO.B)

To assist people with disabilities to obtain accessible housing by using a web-based housing registry.

Principles in Action (08.HO.C)

To increase the development of integrated housing for people with disabilities.

Housing for People w/Disabilities Committee (08.HO.D)

To improve housing policy and affordable housing opportunities for people with developmental disabilities.

Quality Assurance

People benefiting from Council quality assurance efforts	207
Dollars leveraged for quality assurance programs	\$149,832
People trained in quality assurance	217
People trained in leadership, self-advocacy, and self-determination	431
People attained membership on public and private bodies and other leadership Coalitions	8
Number of entities participating in partnerships or coalitions created or sustained as a result of Council efforts	185

The Self-Advocacy Leadership Series (SALS) is a ten-week course designed and led by a self-advocate to teach leadership skills to other self-advocates and prepare them to serve as leaders in the community. There are more than 115 SALS graduates to date. In 2008, three SALS classes led to 31 new graduates. Classes took place at Holyoke Community College and Berkshire Community College, adding to the academic feel of the series, and providing an opportunity for self-advocates experiencing a post-secondary environment. Classes were also held at Attleboro Public Library, and the fall semester class is in session at South Norfolk County Arc. A graduates meeting was convened in preparation for the annual legislative reception. Fifteen graduates attended and assisted at the reception, greeting guests and meeting with and providing information to their respective legislators.

The Council continued its collaboration with MA Advocates Standing Strong, the statewide self-advocacy organization for people with developmental disabilities. The partnership focused on working toward self-sufficiency, and was successful in leveraging additional funds from other state sources and the MA Developmental Disabilities Network partners to develop and implement a regional pilot project to enhance the advocacy efforts of local self advocacy groups.

The Council empowerment and conference support programs provided opportunities to 84 individuals with DD and 167 family members to attend 124 events to improve their knowledge and advocacy skills. Participants have praised the program as “a great help,” and “life changing,” a significant impact for an average of \$330 per person. The Council also supported the Stone Soup Conference, enabling 3 self advocates and 49 family members to attend this event on supporting family members to enable them to grow on their own.

Through various initiatives the Council provided training to 217 people with developmental disabilities and family members and systems advocacy training to over 1400 participants. Over 1,900 people were supported in their systems advocacy activities. 431 people were trained in leadership, self-advocacy and self determination. The Council completed the next phase of the Developmental Disabilities Suite Project, partnering with 32 Councils to improve the accuracy, reliability and validity of performance data. Over 200 distinct entities participated in partnerships created and/or sustained by the Council.

Quality Assurance Projects

Supporting Statewide Self Advocacy (06.QA.Q)

To build a strong state-wide self-advocacy organization in Massachusetts for individuals with developmental disabilities.

Legislative Advocacy Training Project (07.QA.M)

To increase the number of people active in assisting the Council to promote the passage of the Council's legislative platform and other legislative priorities

Statewide Advisory Council on Mental Retardation (08.QA.A)

To advise the department on policy and practice and to coordinate advocacy and information sharing with local advisory boards.

Consumer Empowerment Program (08.QA.B)

To support the participation of individuals and families in conferences and other trainings to enhance their knowledge and self-advocacy skills.

Mentoring Council Self-Advocates (08.QA.C)

To assist Council self-advocates to effectively participate in all Council activities and to enhance leadership and system advocacy skills.

Coalition for the Legal Rights of People with Disabilities (08.QA.E)

To advocate for people with developmental disabilities and families through information sharing, and educating grass roots organizations, legislators and state administrators.

Self-Advocacy Leadership Series (08.QA.F)

To teach advocacy and leadership skills, and to promote individuals with developmental disabilities as leaders in the community.

Conference Support Program (08.QA.X)

Project to provide stipends to pay conference registrations and accommodations for people with developmental disabilities and families.

Recreation

People active in recreational activities	101
People facilitated recreation	56
People trained in recreation	12

The Hockomock YMCA implemented a pilot project to achieve full and meaningful inclusion of children with disabilities in summer day camps. The project hired special education teachers to provide hands-on training to existing recreation staff, and to model behavior necessary for camp success for children and teens with developmental disabilities. Personal Integration Trainers (The "P.I.T. Crew") were on hand all summer to facilitate inclusion, provide on-going training at five integrated camps and to troubleshoot individual issues as they arose. The school department collaborated on this project by offering afternoon recreation at the YMCA to special education students who attended summer school in the morning.

All targeted performance measures were met and some were exceeded. More than 80 children and youth with disabilities participated in this initiative, including 4 children identified as "medically fragile." Next summer, the Hockomock YMCA will expand its integrated summer recreation program by increasing camp enrollment of children and youth with developmental disabilities and by replicating the program at other YMCA branches in Massachusetts. The special education department at the local school system will continue its collaboration with the YMCA.

Recreation Projects

Inclusive Summer Recreation (07.RE.B)

To initiate a pilot project to achieve full and meaningful inclusion of children with disabilities in summer day camps.

Public Policy, Cross Cutting and Other

Public policymakers educated by Council about issues related to Council Initiatives.	339
Products distributed to policymakers about issues related to Council Initiatives	11
Members of the general public estimated to have been reached by Council public education, awareness and media initiatives.	1,396,828
People active in systems advocacy	1,964
People trained in systems advocacy	1,489
People have transportation services	66
People have health services	7
People trained in child care	98

The Legislative Advocacy Training Project provides information, resources and training on the legislative and budget process, and individual and organizational skill building to assist individuals and community groups in their advocacy efforts with policymakers. The project conducted ten trainings to 66 Individuals with disabilities, 126 family members, and 40 other advocates, including some legislators, medical school doctors and staff and commissioners at disability agencies. This year the project also focused on working with the Council Public Policy team to improve members' connections with State House policymakers. Council members were assisted to testify in several public meetings and budget and legislative hearings.

The Council's Legislative Task Force advocated for bills filed in the 2007-2008 legislative session to benefit people with DD. The Task Force selected one priority bill, 5 support bills, and 12 endorsed bills. The Task Force also teamed with the Arc of Massachusetts, the MA Down Syndrome Congress and other advocacy groups to secure passage of these important bills. In 2008 five bills passed that were part of the Council's platform, including a bill to change the name of the Department of Mental Retardation to the Department of Developmental Services, a bill to require transition planning at age 14 and a bill to mandate short term objectives in all Individual Education Plans.

The Council continued to provide information and referral on disability related issues to individuals with developmental disabilities and families. The Council held an annual legislative reception in March, which provided a forum for hundreds of people to present their legislative and budget priorities to policymakers, and to visit with their elected officials. Eleven publications and many smaller documents were produced and disseminated by the Council and partners to policymakers. In addition, the public awareness efforts of many Council projects included articles in newspapers and other local publications.

Public Policy, Cross Cutting and Other Activities

Annual Legislative Reception (06.CR.C)

To provide an opportunity for individuals with disabilities, family members and advocates to educate state legislators, and administration policymakers about their priorities in legislation and budget.

DD Suite Data Reliability Project (08.CR.A)

To maintain the national partnership of collaborating Developmental Disabilities Councils in order to demonstrate a new model of data management that enhances the accuracy and validity of performance reporting.

Legislative Platform Taskforce (08.CR.B)

To advocate for positive legislative and budget actions for people with developmental disabilities and their families.

Web Access and Education Project (08.CR.C)

To educate and inform citizens of the Commonwealth about the Council and its initiatives on behalf of people with developmental disabilities

Diversity Outreach Project (08.CR.D)

To maintain diversity of Council membership.

Information and Referral (08.CR.E)

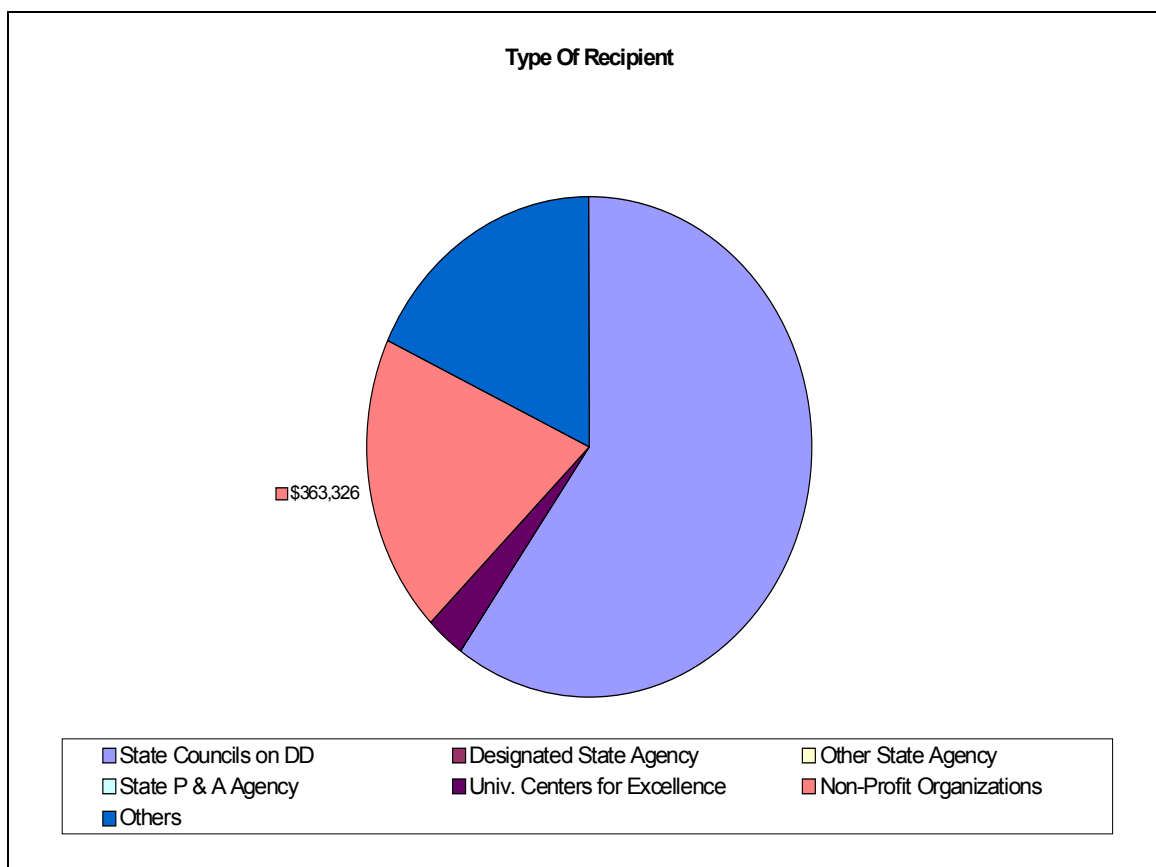
To provide information and referral on disability related issues to individuals with developmental disabilities and families.

Council Alumni Initiative (08.CR.F)

To utilize the skills and experience of former Council members to support meeting the Council State Plan goals and objectives.

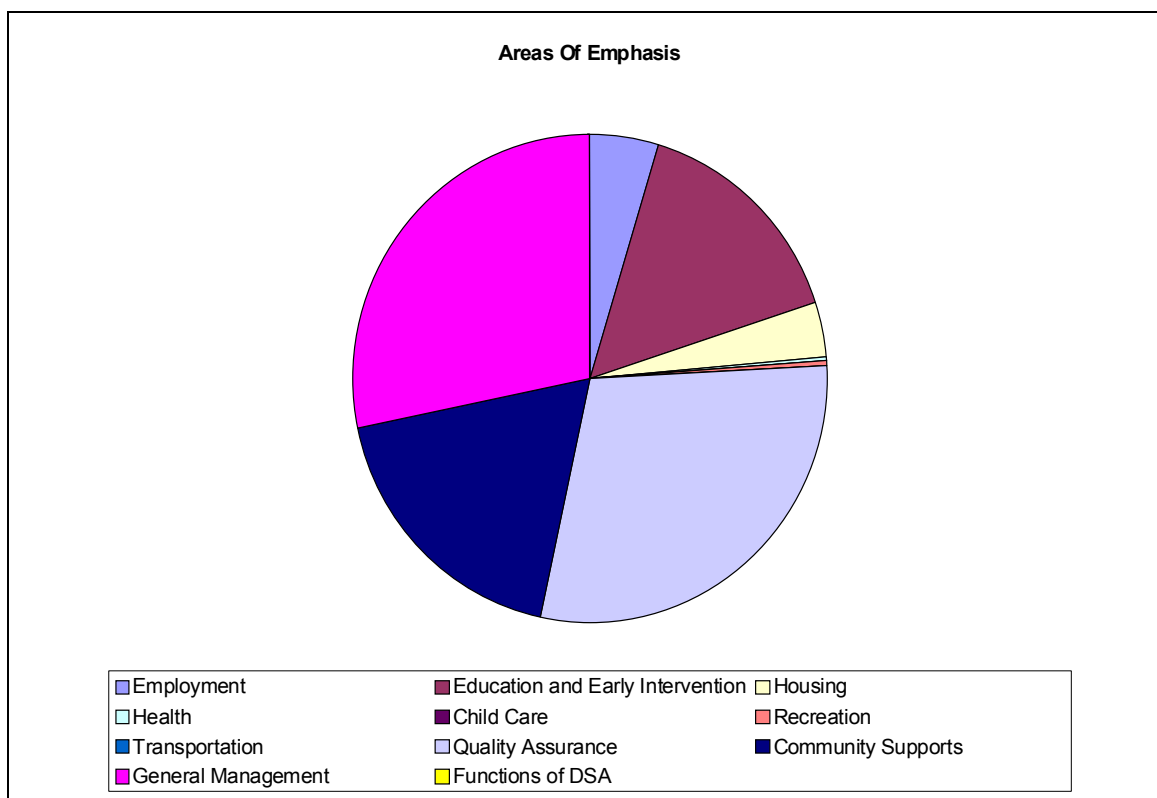
FFY 2008 Expenditures

By Type of Recipient	Council Funds	Other Funds	Total
State Council on DD	\$829,501	\$292,932	\$1,122,433
Designated State Agency	\$0	\$0	\$0
Other State Agency	\$0	\$0	\$0
State Protection and Advocacy Agency	\$1000	\$0	\$1000
University Centers for Excellence	\$26,998	\$23,242	\$50,230
Non-Profit Organizations	\$240,807	\$122,519	\$340,563
Others	\$208,575	\$131,993	\$340,568
Total	\$1,306,871	\$570,686	\$1,877,557



FFY 2008 Expenditures

By Areas of Emphasis	DD Council Funds	Other Funds	Total
Employment	\$76,582	\$13,041	\$89,623
Education and Early Intervention	\$249,702	\$38,515	\$288,217
Housing	\$66,587	\$202	\$66,789
Health	\$3,333	\$0	\$3,333
Child Care	\$0	\$0	\$0
Recreation	\$5,000	\$2,500	\$7,500
Transportation	\$0	\$0	\$0
Quality Assurance	\$366,277	\$179,541	\$545,818
Community Supports	\$298,674	\$43,956	\$342,630
General Management	\$240,716	\$292,931	\$533,647
Functions of Designated State Agency	\$0	\$0	\$0
Total	\$1,306,871	\$570,686	\$1,877,557



State Developmental Disabilities Network Collaboration

The Massachusetts Developmental Disabilities (DD) Network is a collaborative of the four organizations funded through the Developmental Disabilities Act to promote self-determination, independence, productivity, integration and inclusion in all facets of community life for people with developmental disabilities and their families. The network partners accomplish this mission through advocacy, education, research and dissemination of information. The following are selected collaborative activities undertaken by the network in 2008.

Leadership Development

Community leadership by people with developmental disabilities and family members does not meet the level needed to maintain strong community organizing and systems advocacy.

The DD Network maintains an ongoing year long fellowship for people with developmental disabilities and family members to develop and enhance leadership skills and knowledge of disability issues and systems advocacy. In addition, each network member provides support to the statewide self-advocacy organization to assist it in developing new leaders in self-advocacy.

The Fellowship has prepared graduates for greater opportunities in disability advocacy. Recent graduates have been completed the Robert F. Kennedy Public Policy Fellowship and the Leadership Education in Neurodevelopmental Disabilities (LEND) graduate school program. One graduate is employed at the Council, a recent graduate was elected as chairperson of the statewide self advocacy organization, and two graduates have become MA Developmental Disabilities Council members.

Supporting Self Advocacy

The statewide self-advocacy organization has existed for over ten years but has been unable to move toward independence and self-sufficiency. The DD Network is collaborating to support board independence and program self-sufficiency, and to assist in expanding the self-advocacy network. In FFY08 the network, along with the Department of Mental Retardation, underwrote the development of a regional pilot to better link the local self-advocacy groups with statewide activities.

The Council directly supports the statewide self-advocacy organization, focusing on working toward self-sufficiency, and was successful in supporting efforts to expand the organization's working relationships with the DD Network, state agencies, other advocacy groups and provider organizations.

Consumer Satisfaction

The Council conducts ongoing customer satisfaction surveys and reports the results annually. Surveys are obtained from people with developmental disabilities, family members and other individuals involved with Council initiatives. In 2008 the Council transitioned to the new required federal format for Customer Satisfaction. The detailed survey asks respondents to rate the impact of the Council supported initiative, activity or project. The results for the detailed survey are shown here. The Council received 130 surveys through the Council empowerment program, the Self Advocacy Leadership Series and various grantee projects in 2008. Results are slightly improved in all areas over 2007.

Customer Satisfaction Results – FFY 2008				
Number of responses: 130				
1. Respect - I (or my family member) was treated with respect during project activity.			Yes: 98.4% No: 1.6%	
2. Choice - I (or my family member) have more choice and control as a result of project activity.			Yes: 97.6% No: 2.4%	
3. Community - I (or my family member) can do more things in my community as a result of this project.			Yes: 93.4% No: 6.6%	
4. Satisfied - I am satisfied with the project activity.	Strongly Agree 88.8%	Agree 10.4%	Disagree 0%	Strongly Disagree 0.8%
5. Better Life - My life is better because of the project activity.	Strongly Agree 78.4%	Agree 20.0%	Disagree 0%	Strongly Disagree 1.6%